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BIBLICAL SOCIOLOGY. IV

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We have now sketched the early institutions of Israel. Our approaching problem is the rise of the distinctive system of Judaism. There still remains for attention, however, one outstanding topic before we turn to the social process that followed the settlement in Canaan. Consideration of this topic is not a matter of choice; it comes naturally between the subjects previously taken up and those that follow.

I. THE COVENANT WITH YAHWEH

Most religions of antiquity contemplate their gods as the physical fathers of their worshipers, connected with them by ties of actual kinship. The relation between a people and its god is thus not a matter of choice, like that of husband and wife, but of *necessity*, as in the case of all relatives by blood. But many of the biblical documents declare that Yahweh and Israel became connected by a definite covenant, at a given time, and at a particular place. In the words of Hosea, "I am Yahweh thy god *from the land of Egypt*" (Hos. 12:9). In accordance with this declaration, we are told that Yahweh chose Israel for his people at the time they were encamped in Goshen, on the borders of Egypt; and that the people and the god entered into a solemn covenant at Mount Horeb-Sinai. It is, indeed, upon a covenant, or testament, that the Bible turns. The familiar word "testament," in one of its earlier usages, indicates a covenant; and in this way it finds application to Scripture. "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a god" (Exod. 6:7). "And thou, Yahweh, *became* their god" (II Sam. 7:24). Now the question here is, How came the religion of Israel to have a covenant character? What are the objective facts underlying the tradition that Yahweh and Israel were not at first related, but that they came into connection at a particular time and place?

The Old Testament speaks of several covenants between Yahweh and the patriarchs prior to the one at Mount Sinai. But the transaction contemplated in the body of the Hexateuch, the Judges-Samuel-Kings narrative, and the books of the prophets, is the Sinai covenant. It is to this that Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets refer, either expressly or by implication. The covenant of the prophets, as Professor A. B. Davidson writes, is the covenant of Sinai, in which Yahweh became the god of Israel.¹

It is evident that the transaction referred to must be of great importance. If Yahweh became the god of Israel, it follows, according to the logic of primitive religion, that he must have been connected with some other people before he became the god of Israel. There is no escape from this conclusion. The covenant, then, implies *contact* between the Israelite clans and some other social group, or groups. What was its real nature? And what was the objective situation? If Yahweh were the god of another people before he *became* the god of Israel, who was that other people? The unanimous testimony of the biblical documents, however they may differ as to standpoint, is that the great covenant was made in the Arabian wilderness prior to the invasion of Canaan. This transaction, then, lies on the borderland between Israel's prehistoric age and the historic period. There is difficulty in reconstructing the details of the situation upon the basis of the material at our command; but its general features are clearly outlined in relief against the hazy background of myth and legend.²

We have already learned that prior to the invasion of Canaan the Israelites were shepherd clans wandering in the

¹ Davidson, *Theology of the Old Testament* (New York, 1904), p. 246.

² The view now to be presented will seem strange to non-specialists. It is, however, a well-known hypothesis in biblical scholarship. See Budde, *Religion of Israel to the Exile* (New York, 1899) *passim*; H. P. Smith, *Old Testament History* (New York, 1903), p. 72; Barton, *Semitic Origins* (New York, 1902), pp. 269 ff.; Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy* (New York, 1903), pp. 35, 64, 68; Kent, *Beginnings of Hebrew History* (New York, 1904) p. 255; Addis, *Hebrew Religion* (New York and London, 1906), p. 70; Paton, "Origin of Yahweh-Worship in Israel" (*Biblical World*, 1907).

desert of Arabia; and that during a famine season they encamped on the Goshen pasture lands in the northeastern part of Egypt. "Ye may dwell in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians. And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the land of Goshen" (Gen. 46:34; 47:27). In regard to this event, Professor Robertson Smith writes:

Goshen did not belong to the (Egyptian) Delta proper, which can never have been given up to a shepherd tribe, and would not have suited their way of life. In all ages nomadic or half-nomadic tribes, quite distinct from the Egyptians proper, have pastured their flocks on the verge of the rich lands of the Delta. That the Israelites at this time came under any considerable influence of Egyptian civilization must appear highly improbable to anyone who knows the life of the nomads of Egypt even in the present day.³

Another tradition locates the Israelites in the midst of the land of Egypt, in contact with city life, where they borrow the jewelry of the Egyptians. Besides this, the accounts are heavily burdened with miracle stories. But when the central interest of the narrative begins to shift away from Egypt into the Arabian desert, and returns to simpler conditions, then the sociologist begins to find sober material having affinity with Semitic institutions at large. During the sojourn of the Israelites in Goshen there was begun a connection between them and certain other desert clans which was continued for centuries. The evidence of this is widespread throughout the Old Testament; and it offers a credible point of attachment for scientific interpretation. The first notice of this connection between Israel and another people is that in which the Israelite Moses leaves Egypt, goes out into the Arabian desert, and marries into the clan of the *Kenites* (Exod., chap 2). This clan was a division of the Midianites, whose wandering-ground was in the neighborhood of Mount Sinai (Exod., chaps 2 and 3). Later we read that some of the Kenites accompanied the Israelites into Canaan:

³ W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel* (London, 1897), p. 379. See also H. P. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 61, "Our one fixed point is the uniform tradition that Israel was settled in Goshen."

"And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the children of Judah: and they went and dwelt among the people" (Judg., 1:16). Later still we see the wife of Heber the Kenite helping forward the cause of Israel (Judg., chaps. 4 and 5). There were Kenites in Judah in the days of Saul and David (1 Sam. 15:6; 30:30). At another time we find Jehonadab, the son of Rechab the Kenite, fighting on the side of Israel and Yahweh (II Kings, 10:15 f.).⁴ In the time of the prophet Jeremiah, just before the Babylonian exile, we see the descendants of Jehonadab fleeing to Jerusalem for fear of the Chaldean army (Jer., chap. 35). At the time of the Exodus, then, the Israelites became connected with the Kenites of the Sinai region; these two peoples were associated in the invasion and settlement of Canaan; and the Kenites were at length practically absorbed in Israel. The meaning of this line of evidence will appear presently.

Looking farther we find that the Old Testament shows many traces of connection between Yahweh and the region of Mount Sinai. The mountain itself is called in Hebrew *har elohim*, that is, a mountain sacred to a god, or gods (Exod. 3:1). It was not an ordinary mountain, without special distinction. It was identified in some way with a god, or with the gods. Hence, in the first interview between Moses and the elohim, the former was commanded, "Draw not nigh hither. Put off thy shoes, for the place whereon thou standest is *kodesh*" (Exod. 3:5). We have met this word at earlier stages of our work; and its general meaning has been indicated. The English versions translate it, without comment, "holy," making the last sentence read, "The place whereon thou standest is holy." The modern reader hastily draws the inference that Mount Sinai was "holy" because here the God of the universe chose to reveal himself to an Israelite shepherd. But this is not the sense of the passage when viewed in the light of the biblical documents as a whole; and it is clear that the editors of Exodus are transmitting a primitive tradition whose real import they do not understand.

⁴For the Kenite descent of Jehonadab, consult the genealogical register in I Chron. 2:55.

The term *kodesh* in its fundamental meaning, as we have already seen, refers to physical consecration, and it is in this common, Semitic sense that we must interpret the word in this passage. Sinai is *kodesh* because it is the physical seat of Yahweh, a mighty *elohim* of the desert. And for many centuries after the invasion, the Sinai region, lying south of Canaan, was regarded as the original seat of the covenant-god of Israel. He was not called "the god of the land" until Israel had acquired a firm foothold in the territory of Canaan. In the Judges period when the invaders, under the lead of Deborah and Barak, battled with the Canaanites, it was declared that Yahweh came up to help Israel from his home in the south, riding through the air on a storm-cloud. His path from Sinai lay through the desert of Seir and the field of Edom. So reads the great Battle Ode of Deborah: "Yahweh, when thou wentest forth out of Seir; when thou marchest out of the field of Edom; the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped. Yea the clouds dropped water. The mountains flowed down at the presence of Yahweh; even yon Sinai at the presence of Yahweh, the god of Israel" (Judg. 5:4f.).⁵ In another passage we read: "Yahweh came from Sinai, and rose from Seir unto them. He shined forth from Mount Paran" (Deut. 33:2). The last name is connected, like Seir, with the Sinai region. Elsewhere we find: "The Holy One came from Mount Paran. . . . The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble" (Hab. 3:3, 7). We have already observed that "Midian" is a more comprehensive name for the Kenite clan. Moses' father-in-law is "the priest of Midian," although he is a Kenite (Exod., 3:1). The idea of Yahweh's connection with the south persisted long after the rise of the monarchy. For the discouraged prophet Elijah sought the god of Israel, not at some sacred place in Canaan, but at the ancient

⁵ This quotation is taken from the earliest contemporary monument of Hebrew literature. The phrase "Even yon Sinai" is thought by some to be an interpolation. If it be such, the idea of Yahweh as coming up from the south is not affected, as the desert of Seir and the field of Edom lie on the way thither. Again, if the phrase be an addition to the original, it is significant that Sinai is mentioned, rather than some other mountain. See Moore, *Judges* (New York, 1895), p. 141.

mount of *the elohim*, forty days journey to the south (I Kings. 19:8). Even in the century following Elijah, the ancient idea of Yahweh as a god of mountains, thunder, and war held with such tenacity that Hosea found it difficult to convince the people that it was Yahweh, and not the Baalim, who blessed the soil of Israel and made the crops grow (Hosea, *passim*).

As to the significance of these data, it is becoming clear to scholars that Israel derived the worship of Yahweh from the Kenites of the Sinai desert. It is not that the religion of Israel, as we have it in its final and peculiar biblical form, issues from such a source. Far from that. The religion by which Israel finally became distinguished from the other nations of the ancient world is the result of a process of development. But in the early Semitic stage of Israel, Yahweh was regarded as one among many real gods. Being a local god of Israel, and at the same time a covenant-god, it follows that his worship must have been adopted by Israel from some outside source. The transaction at Mount Sinai has never been adequately treated from the standpoint of the older theology of Christendom. All the data relating to it call for the most careful and patient study. The leading modern scholars are turning to this view, not hastily, but as a result of long inquiry into the facts of primitive religion. The drift of criticism toward this position represents an encouraging approach to the sociological standpoint from the ground of theology. For it means that biblical critics, who are mostly theological scholars, have succeeded in working their own way up to the proposition that the covenant feature of Old Testament religion is due primarily to the contact of alien social groups.

Having sketched this position, we must now examine the biblical data further with reference to it. Some of the strongest evidence has not yet come before us. We have said that when the narrative relates to Israel in Egypt it is loaded with historical improbabilities; but that when it carries Israel into the desert it includes material that has affinity with Semitic social conditions at large. Yet it is the miraculous and the dramatic that have been emphasized in popular study of the Bible; while

the more sober and less pretentious material has been overlooked as too humble and insignificant for close attention. It is upon the humbler material that modern scientific scholarship is directing its keenest analysis. The miracles that are said to have been worked through Moses and Aaron by Yahweh have no meaning for the scientist aside from their value as evidence of primitive psychology. For these miracles can be paralleled from all the epics of antiquity. We have already noted the naïve nature of the biblical accounts, in that the gods of Egypt, working through the magicians, are allowed to be miracle-workers themselves, the distinction of Yahweh being that he is able to perform greater wonders than the Egyptians. But this is no more than the dictates of loyalty prescribe to the worshipers of all the gods. Each must believe that his god can in some way outdo all rivals. But if the scientific scholar has little concern about the miracles of Moses, he is intensely interested in the traditions about the experiences of Moses in the desert. For Moses was the mediator between Israel and the Kenites; and he it was who brought about the covenant with Yahweh.

We have seen that when Moses went into the wilderness of Sinai, he became the husband of Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, the priest and leader of the Kenite shepherds. According to a narrative in *Exod.* 4:24-26, he was not accustomed to the rites and ceremonies of the Kenite religion. This was natural, since each clan had its own religious mysteries. The account has no relation to its context, having reference neither to that which comes before, nor to that which follows. It implies that circumcision was one of the rites of the Kenite religion. But Moses had not been circumcised before his marriage, and hence was not "a bridegroom of blood." This kindled the anger of Yahweh, who sought to kill Moses. The wrath of the deity was appeased by Zipporah, who took a stone knife and circumcised her son, making the blood wet the feet of Moses. This was a kind of substitutionary sacrifice, which converted Moses into "a bridegroom of blood," and thus turned away the fierce anger of the desert god. After the operation, Zipporah says in effect, "Now you are in the correct ritual attitude, because the circum-

cision has made you a bridegroom of blood.”⁶ This interesting little story is thrust bodily into the Exodus narrative; and its primitive atmosphere is unmistakable.

Regarding the covenant itself, we find highly important material in Exod. 18:12. Let us notice the wording carefully. “And Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for *elohim*. And Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread with Moses’ father-in-law before *the elohim*.” It should be pointed out that the burnt offering and sacrifices were not brought by Moses nor any of the Israelites, but by Jethro, the Kenite priest. It is the Kenite who is placed in the foreground. Jethro is not an interested outsider who helps the Israelites in performance of their own religious worship. On the contrary, he is an *insider* who bears a necessary part in the introduction of the Israelites to his religion. For this is a sacrificial meal, and Jethro is officiating in his priestly character. He does not eat bread with the Israelites. On the contrary they eat with *him*. Scanning the passage once more, we note that Moses himself took no part in the ceremony. But the reason for this apparently strange omission is clear: Moses had previously affiliated with the Kenites by marriage, and was already a worshiper of Yahweh. Hence there was no need that he take part in the important ceremony by which the two social groups came into connection. It is clear again that the editor of Exodus is transcribing antique traditions which he does not understand.

Under some circumstances the adoption of a god by one people from another means that the converts are lost in the mass of the earlier worshipers. The outstanding fact here, however, is that the Israelites retained their own social identity. What the reason for this fact may be we cannot say. There may have been more than one reason. But the fact itself and the reason for it are different matters. If the converts bear a small numerical proportion to the earlier worshipers, and if they join the organization and take the name of the latter, then their social identity is lost. But none of these conditions prevailed in the

⁶ The old version translates, with little sympathy for the real meaning, “Surely a bloody husband thou art to me.”

case under consideration. The initiation of Israel into the worship of Yahweh by the Kenite priest is paralleled by another instance in which the circumstances lie more fully in the light of history. The northern territory of Israel was depopulated of Israelites by the King of Assyria, and then filled up with colonists from various parts of his empire. These colonists were inducted into the worship of Yahweh by an Israelite priest. At the same time the new converts, like their Israelite predecessors, combined this worship with that of other gods: "They feared Yahweh and served their own gods after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away" (II Kings 17:33). These colonists did not lose their social identity through adoption of Yahweh from Israel; and, in the same way, the Israelites in the wilderness, many centuries earlier, did not lose their identity simply because they adopted Yahweh from the Kenites. Although the clans of Israel could not have been the enormous host represented in the Pentateuch, the impression is that they exceeded the Kenites numerically. Besides this, they did not join the organization of the earlier worshipers of Yahweh, and take their name. Moreover, only a portion of the Kenites accompanied Israel into Canaan. Thus, the principal result of contact between these two lay in the sphere of worship. The covenant brought Israel and the god of Sinai together; but it did not effect a formal union of the two societies. It was therefore properly spoken of as a covenant between Israel and Yahweh, and not between Israel and the Kenites. Furthermore, the subsequent religious practice of Israel for centuries, in associating the cults of Yahweh and countless other gods, proves that this obscure transaction in the desert of Arabia did not have that peculiar importance for contemporaries which it acquired for posterity.

Doubtless this handling of the biblical material will be strange and perplexing to many minds. If the view appear improbable that Israel adopted the worship of Yahweh by covenant, it should be emphasized, in the first place, that the adoption of an alien faith was not in any way unusual in ancient society. We have indeed become familiar by this time with the

circle of ideas and practices in which adoption figures as an item of social importance. And when it is once thoroughly realized that the earlier worship of Yahweh in Israel came within the field of primitive religion and life, the possibility of its adoption from an alien social group will not seem so strange. Our previous examination of kinship and religion has prepared us to understand this practice. The original form of organized society is that of a kin-group in which the god is a powerful member of the clan. But inasmuch as the theory of actual relationship does not cover the facts of social life, it is necessary to extend the bonds of blood kinship by legal fictions. Aliens are included by marriage or adoption, agreeing to act in all respects as members of the kindred to which they now become attached. This agreement, or covenant, involves worship of the god acknowledged by the receiving clan.

Not only is ancient thought familiar with the idea that a religion may be adopted, but many of the biblical writers assume that Yahweh and Israel became related as god and people in precisely this way. One of the documents in the Book of Joshua regards the ancestors of Israel up to the time of the Sinai covenant as having worshiped other gods than Yahweh, for it speaks of "the gods your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt" (Josh. 24:14). These expressions, "beyond the River and in Egypt," cover the entire ancestral history up to the time of the covenant. For, according to the traditions of Israel, their forefathers came from the Mesopotamian region, "beyond the River," i. e., the Euphrates, and afterward settled on the border of Egypt. So that when a biblical writer speaks of the gods which the fathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, this is good evidence of a tradition that Yahweh was not worshiped before the Sinai period. To the same effect, the prophet Hosea, as quoted above, emphasizes the proposition, "I am Yahweh *thy god from the land of Egypt*" (Hos. 12:9). We should also bear in mind such expressions as, "And thou, Yahweh, *became* their god" (II Sam. 7:24), and, "I will take you to me for a people and I will be to you a god" (Exod. 6:7).

It is worth while to emphasize that the Sinai covenant

recorded in the book of Exodus is the first covenant in which there is a tradition of the mediatorship of a social group between the human and the divine parties to the transaction. The covenants with the patriarchs in Genesis, on the contrary, have no social background. The fact that the tradition of the Sinai covenant brings to view the obscure and humble Kenites, is one ground for our confidence that here we are in contact with real history. Of course, the editors do not handle the Kenites intelligently. They find these people of the desert to be a burden and an embarrassment, of which they could not be rid without recasting the entire material of the tradition. But the significant thing here emphasized is not the way the tradition is handled, but the simple fact that the Kenites are a *part* of the tradition. Their presence is in complete accord with the usages of primitive religion; whereas the absence of social mediatorship stamps the covenants of Genesis as unhistorical.

A very significant indirect witness to the change of religion at Sinai is found in the Pentateuchal use of the terms "elohim" and "Yahweh." Our point of departure will now be the accounts embodying the *traditions* respecting the first interviews between Moses and Yahweh at the sacred mount. If this god had been worshiped in earlier times by Moses and the Israelites, it is natural to suppose that they would know his name. The Moabites knew the name of their god Chemosh. The Israelites after the settlement in Canaan were familiar with the name of their god. For all the heroes, kings, priests, and people knew and used the name of Yahweh. The name was a commonplace in the mouths of Gideon, Jephthah, Samuel, Saul, David, Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and all the rest. But, according to the ancient tradition, when Moses meets this god at Sinai he does not know what to call him. So he asks the question, so strange to modern ears, but so intelligible from the standpoint of primitive religion, "What is your name?" This item, together with Moses' lack of circumcision, leads to the inference that in the earliest form of the Sinai tradition Moses was not at once initiated into all the mysteries of the Kenite religion. He knew at this time that the god of Sinai was an elohim—a god; but

he did not know the special personal name of the god. This is like being acquainted with a man without knowing his name. Accordingly, we read: "And Moses said unto the elohim, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The elohim of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, What is his name?—*what shall I say unto them?*" (Ex. 3:13). To this question several answers were forthcoming. In the first answer the elohim was obscure—as if, like his Kenite worshipers, he were slow in admitting the alien to the sacred mysteries. For his answer to Moses was: "*Eh-yeh asher eh-yeh*" (vs. 14). The meaning of this expression is hard to render. It might be translated, "I am what I am." Moses appears to be the sole target of this reply, for the elohim continues: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *Eh-yeh* hath sent me unto you" (vs. 14). This, however, is not sufficient, since the deity goes on as follows to reveal the full divine name: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Yahweh, the elohim of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, hath sent me unto you. This is my name" (vss. 13-15).

It appears, then, neither Moses nor his brethren had ever known the name of this god. A more positive explanation than the above was given at a later interview, thus: "And elohim spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Yahweh; and I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as *el-shaddai*; but by my name Yahweh, I was not known unto them" (Exod. 6:2, 3). This is explicit enough. Not Moses, nor his contemporaries, nor yet the putative ancestors of Israel, had ever known the object of their worship by his name Yahweh. Let us consult the book of Genesis, and see if this is true. Were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ignorant of this name? That is, do the *traditions* contemplate them as ignorant of the name? We are not at this point asking, What were the objective, historical facts? but, What do the traditions indicate? The Abram, or Abraham, narratives in Genesis begin at the twelfth chapter. In this chapter we read: "And Abram passed through the land . . . and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Ai on the

east; and there he builded an altar unto *Yahweh*, and called upon the name of *Yahweh*" (Gen. 12:6, 8).⁷ Thus Abraham frequently uses the name, beginning in the chapter cited and thenceforward into chap. 24. Looking farther, we read: "And Isaac digged again the wells of water. . . . And he went up from thence to Beer-sheeba. . . . And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of *Yahweh*" (Gen. 26:18, 23, 25). And farther we find: "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely *Yahweh* is in this place" (Gen. 28:16).

Thus we see that one tradition denies, while the other affirms, that the patriarchs knew the name of *Yahweh* before the Sinai period. At first the student is puzzled by these contradictions; but their secret is very easy to penetrate. The Pentateuch, as already pointed out, is a composite work. It is the joining together of a number of documents and traditions by a number of writers and editors. There is no result of modern scholarship more certain than this. With regard to the question just now before us, the contradiction of each other by Genesis and Exodus is clearly the result of bringing together, without harmonizing, two different traditions regarding the same fact. After Israel had been settled in Canaan for centuries as the people of *Yahweh*, and the idea of him as the only true God had arisen, it became incredible that the forefathers had never known him. Consequently, we have the traditions in Genesis which make the patriarchs call upon *Yahweh* by name and build altars in his name. Then, independently of this, another tradition arose which deferred to the Kenite origin of *Yahweh* far enough to make the patriarchs and their descendants ignorant of that name up to the time of Sinai; so that the Israelites took up at this time the worship of the god

⁷ Readers who are confined to the King James Version lose this point. As already explained, this version translates *Yahweh* as "the LORD," or "GOD," in capitals, unless the nature of the context forces it to be more faithful to the Hebrew, in which case it renders it "Jehovah." Except for an occasional marginal reading, the English Revised is little better. But the American Revised translates the Hebrew consistently throughout as "Jehovah." Although even this barbarized form is not correct, the American Version, by this usage, exhibits fully the point under discussion.

of their fathers under a new name. This of course collides with the other view; and neither of them adequately meets the demands of the situation. Both try to adjust the final system of Judaism with the crude ideas inherited from the primitive age; and neither is successful. If, as one tradition affirms, the name of Yahweh was known prior to Sinai, how came it that Moses and the Israelities were all of them ignorant of it? And if to this it be replied that they had forgotten him in Egypt, then what ground is there for Yahweh's own appeal to their memory of himself as "the god of their fathers"? Again, if the statement be correct that the forefathers *knew* the name, then the statement that they did *not* know it is incorrect. One or the other must be wrong, since both cannot be right. As a matter of fact, judged from the standpoint of the Old Testament as a whole, neither is right. But when considered together, both give significant indirect witness to an important change of religion during the Sinai period.

We are well aware that the older schools of biblical interpretation have a harmonistic adjustment of the difficulty at this point. They contend that the divergence between the two traditions just noted is apparent and not real. It is claimed that the patriarchs knew the form and pronunciation of the name Yahweh, precisely as the Book of Genesis indicates; but that they did not know the real meaning of the name as a symbol of his character. But this is an artificial subtlety for which the Bible nowhere gives any warrant. When a biblical writer wants to say that the *nature* of Yahweh is not known, he says what he means. The great prophets exhort Israel to know Yahweh—not to know his name. "Did not thy father do justice and righteousness? He judged the cause of the poor and needy. Was not this to know me? saith Yahweh" (Jer. 22:15, 16). Conversely, when the prophets want to say that Israel knows not Yahweh, and acts contrary to his righteous character, they do not say, "Israel knows not the *name* of Yahweh." The tradition embodied in Exod. 6:3, then, means exactly what it says, i. e., that the forefathers were ignorant of the name itself. And this, as we have seen, is flatly contradicted by the Genesis tra-

ditions. The effort to harmonize the two proceeds upon the belief of the later compilers of the Bible that Yahweh was considered as the one true God from the first. The only natural explanation is that the compilers of the Bible brought these conflicting traditions together, just as they did many others, without paying special attention to the differences between them. If it be said that they must, then, have been exceedingly careless, the answer is, that the biblical material was not assembled by scientific historical critics, but by men who were intensely occupied with practical religious and social problems. As we pointed out in the first paper, the controlling motive in the preparation of the Bible is *edification*, or building-up, of men in the worship of God. Two sorts of people had a hand in this task—the prophets, who wanted men to be edified according to the prophetic idea; and the priests, who wanted men to be edified according to the priestly idea. This purpose is enough to atone for such oversights as the one here in view.

Having thus emphasized the Sinai covenant as a phenomenon of primitive religion, what are we to conclude as to the contents, or stipulations, of the covenant itself? Did Moses bring forward the Pentateuch, or the substance of it, in the name of Yahweh? Did he lay down the Ten Commandments and other laws? And did he claim for Yahweh a monopoly of Israel's worship which excluded other gods? We cannot here consider these questions finally, but will speak of them in a preliminary way. Granted that Yahwism at the Sinai period was only the religion of a local god, the giving of the Ten Commandments and other moral laws would have been superfluous. In the clan state of society, morality within the group is *always* regulated by the consuetudinary law that springs from the feeling of relationship; and it is rigidly enforced by the discipline of the clan-group. Israel at this time was not a nation, but at the most a few desert clans. And in the clan there is no need for written law. Nor could there have been a demand for exclusive worship of Yahweh. For after the settlement in Canaan the Israelites mingled the worship of Yahweh with that of other gods; and there was no protest against this practice for more

than two hundred years. We shall go carefully into this phase of the subject at a later stage of our work. At present we can only reiterate that the history of Israel down to Elijah fails to disclose anything like the struggle against other gods which comes into evidence in the time of that prophet. It is a matter of fact that the prophets never appeal to the Pentateuch, with its elaborate system of laws and its remarkable predictions. Had there been a work of the kind in existence, how immensely would the prophets have been strengthened in their great campaign against injustice and the worship of other gods. But they made no appeal to it because there was no Pentateuch to which they could refer. The promulgation of ethical monotheism by or through Moses at Sinai was not demanded by the situation. It would have been sheer supernaturalism, in the dualistic sense, had it occurred; and the subsequent work of the prophets and priests would merely have been application of Mosaic teaching to the conditions of later times. Of course, we do not deny the possibility of a supernatural revelation to Moses, in the sense just named. But it is not necessary to invoke anything of that kind in order to explain the social development of Israel after the Sinai period. And if no such invocation is necessary, then a supernatural revelation to Moses would have been superfluous.

II. THE SETTLEMENT IN CANAAN

In view of the facts thus far brought out by our examination, it is clear that the history of Israel cannot be followed back with certainty to a period much *before* the settlement in Canaan. It is true that the Bible, as it now stands before us, professes to go back many centuries anterior to that exciting period. Accordingly, we find in the first five books of the Bible a series of narratives relating to affairs before the invasion of Canaan by Israel. At first glance these books treat history with a fulness of knowledge and authority equal to that which we find in the literature dealing with affairs after the settlement. To the uncritical reader there seems to be no difference between the Hexateuch, on the one side, and the Judges-Samuel-Kings narratives, on the other. For the wayfaring man there is no line of de-

markation between fact and myth. We seem to have in the Bible a collection of equally trustworthy books; and it appears to be a matter of great presumption to assert anything to the contrary. It is much to the advantage of sociological higher criticism that this part of the biblical problem has been carefully handled from the literary and historical standpoints.

If we look into the literatures of all ancient peoples we find that the narratives relating to the earliest periods are full of miraculous, or supernatural, accounts. According to these wonderful stories, man everywhere lives in the presence of the gods. Everywhere the gods mingle with men and interfere with the course of history. Social institutions whose origins are not clearly understood are said to have been established by the gods. But as we follow the narratives along from period to period, coming up through later and later times, the history of all ancient peoples loses the character of supernaturalism and assumes a more conventional, matter-of-fact aspect. The point where supernatural history ends and natural history begins cannot be exactly indicated in every case, for the reason that all early tradition is a blending of myth and fact. In regard to this problem, three stages of investigation have succeeded each other.⁸ In the first stage, all miraculous traditions are taken as absolutely true. In the second stage, all miraculous traditions are rejected as absolutely false. In the third stage, all miraculous traditions are carefully and skilfully examined; and a nucleus of historical fact is recognized in them. Good examples of the application of these methods are to be found in the treatment of Greek, Roman, and German history. And precisely the same attitudes have been taken up with reference to the history of Israel. The miraculous traditions of Israel were formerly accepted as literally true. Then they were held to be pure myths. But finally, scientific scholarship took up its present, mediating position, in which the supernatural traditions of Israel, like those of other nations, are found to contain a kernel of historical fact. Now, the miraculous traditions in question are more numerous in the narratives dealing with affairs *before* the set-

⁸ This has been emphasized by Professor Budde, of Strassburg.

tlement in Canaan than they are in the narratives dealing with affairs *after* the settlement. Hence, it is manifest that the Hexateuch, dealing with history from the creation of the world to the conquest of Canaan, is more exposed to suspicion than are the more sober narratives in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

At this point there are always some who rise to ask how the new methods can draw clear and trustworthy distinctions between myth and fact in the biblical accounts. This question implies the hostile assumption that criticism of the Bible is a purely *subjective* process which depends upon the caprice of the individual scholar. It is assumed that the biblical material itself yields no objective criteria for the guidance of the investigator. It is taken for granted that the critic employs arbitrary standards which give one set of results in one case, and an opposing set of results in another case. The only basis for this charge is the immaturity of criticism itself. Although differences have arisen between scholars who have undertaken literary and historical criticism of the Bible, these differences are outweighed by agreements upon common methods and results. Many of the differences between biblical scholars are due to the fact that the real nature of the Bible itself has not been fully perceived. The question as to the standard of comparison between fact and myth in the biblical narratives does not merely concern the special situation which is before us in the problem of Israel's history; it relates equally to the problem of all history. And it cannot be answered without showing the assimilation of Israel to the rest of human society.

We have already indicated three different items of *agreement* between biblical traditions and scientific study of history. One of these is that the Israelites are not a people apart from the world, but that they belong to a great race consisting of several divisions, or families. Another is, that prior to the settlement in Canaan the Israelites were nomads in the Arabian wilderness. The third is, that the fortunes of the Israelite clans during the nomadic period were dependent upon the natural food supply. These three propositions are established by modern research inde-

pends of any statement of fact in the Bible. For instance, the student of comparative philology notes the family resemblance between the Hebrew language, as we have it in the Bible, and the language of the Phoenicians, Arabians, Moabites, and Mesopotamians. As a result of long and careful study, he declares that the Israelites are blood-relatives of these other peoples. Then, after independent linguistic research, he looks into the Hexateuch and finds that the traditions of Genesis admit the kinship connection of Israel with several Semitic peoples. The scientific historian also learns, by general investigation, that before any people acquires a definite location it is necessarily nomadic. And looking into the Hexateuch, we find that the forefathers of Israel, previous to the acquirement of Canaan, were wanderers. The modern student of industrial history discovers that primitive nomadism is conditioned by the food supply. And looking into the traditions of Israel he finds that before the settlement in Canaan the nomadic Israelites temporarily occupied the pastures of Goshen during a season of awful famine. This is what we mean by the historical basis, or kernel, of early biblical tradition. There is no denying that facts may come down to us in a wrapping of myth.

It should be noted, however, that these points of agreement are in respect of *general* truths, not of special details. Any people may belong to a race greater than itself. Any people is necessarily nomadic before it finds a permanent location. And any nomadic people is necessarily dependent upon the natural food supply. It is when the narratives of the Hexateuch go into detail regarding the history of Israel before the settlement that modern criticism interposes its caveat. It is vitally important to bear in mind, as pointed out in our first instalment, that the Bible in its present form is not contemporary with events described; and that while it is concerned with historical facts, it is not written primarily as history, but as edification. The purpose of the late authors and editors who brought the biblical narratives into their present shape and connections was not the writing of a scientific history, but the promotion of the distinctive biblical religion. In other words, the Bible is a "tend-

ency writing." It is arranged for a purpose that has no immediate reference to history. Interpretation of the Bible from the scientific standpoint must, therefore, make due allowance for this edification tendency when estimating the literal value of biblical documents as testimony to objective historical facts.

It is also necessary to emphasize that the element of the miraculous, or supernatural (which bulks larger in the Hexateuch than elsewhere in the Bible) is precisely the element *common* to the Bible and other ancient writings. It is not supernaturalism in the crude, popular sense that distinguishes the Bible. The element of miracle cannot, of itself, set the Bible up in contrast with other books. At this point the defender of the traditional view always insists upon the real nature of the biblical religion with its platform of ethical monotheism. It is here, indeed, that the contrast between the Bible and other ancient books emerges into high relief. It is a matter of profound significance that traditionalism is always compelled in self-defense to shift its emphasis and appeal to reason by comparing the biblical religion with other ancient systems. It is around this point of distinction that our present question turns. According to the old view of the Bible, the Hexateuch is to be uncritically accepted as a reliable source of information. According to the modern view, on the contrary, the Hexateuch is to be used only with caution. It is a report of history during the nomadic period, and contains only a kernel of literal truth.

A good example of the difficulty attending the use of the Hexateuch as a source for history before the settlement is to be found in the problem which engaged us in the preceding section of our inquiry. We saw that Yahweh was not only the god of Israel, but that he was a *covenant*-god. This made it necessary for us to investigate the objective, historical basis of the covenant tradition. We found that alike in the Judges-Samuel-Kings narrative, the books of the prophets, and the Hexateuch, the covenant was predicated upon a transaction which took place a short time before the Israelite invasion and settlement of Canaan. Yet, in going to the Hexateuch for light upon this matter we encountered great difficulty in envisaging history

which was enacted in the very *latest* period of which the Hexateuch treats. The Sinai covenant is a historical and sociological problem of the first importance; and if the details of the period verging upon the times of the settlement in Canaan are so difficult of restoration, the facts become even more obscure as we recede farther and farther into the Hexateuch.

The justification for beginning connected treatment of the social process in Israel at the time of the settlement may be stated briefly as follows: The presumption is against the literal accuracy of supernatural traditions about the history of *all* ancient peoples. Now, since the supernatural traditions found in biblical literature come within this general category, the presumption is against them also. While they may convey a kernel of history, they are not literally and completely history. Until the contrary is proved, we are entitled to assume, *at the start*, that the supernatural in the literature of ancient Israel is on the same basis as the supernatural in the literatures of other ancient nations. It is, in other words, a reasonable working-hypothesis that the traditions about the interference of Yahweh with Israelite society are in the same category with traditions about the interference of other gods with other societies. Only upon this principle do the early traditions of any ancient people become intelligible. Now, as already emphasized, it is a matter for notice that the supernatural traditions about Israel's history are more numerous in the Hexateuch, which deals with affairs before the settlement, than they are in Judges, Samuel, Kings, and the prophets from Amos to Jeremiah. In the Hexateuch, the element of the miraculous is at the maximum; while in the other books it is at the minimum. We have already observed that the Book of Joshua (the last work in the Hexateuch) presents a picture inconsistent with the later history as given in Samuel and Kings; while, on the other hand, the general impression produced by the Book of Judges harmonizes with Samuel and Kings. We are therefore justified in beginning connected treatment of the social process at the time of the invasion as described in Judges. We stand upon this proposition, however, not as a dogma, but as a reasonable working-idea. Our aim is

to follow it out consistently in order to see whether it will carry us forward to a less difficult and more intelligible explanation of the Bible than that which is given by the traditional view.

In the period described by Judges, Samuel, and Kings, the worship of Yahweh, as actually practiced, is merely one among many worships. Yahweh is regarded as a real god *among* real gods. The officially established religion of Israel has nothing to distinguish it in principle from the religions of contemporary peoples until a very late date. Not until several generations after the Exile was the religion of Israel finally and firmly established in its distinctive biblical character. This proposition is, of course, denied by adherents of the older view, the most recent notable instance being that of Professor James Orr, whose elaborate work, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, is a defense of the traditional theory. Professor Orr argues that the most reasonable assumption is that the religion of Israel acquired its distinctive character in the Sinai period, precisely as narrated in the Hexateuch; and that the burden of proof rests upon those who deny this. Yet Dr. Orr admits, as a matter of course, that the supernatural traditions of other ancient peoples are not credible. On the contrary, we assume at the start that the burden of proof rests upon those who, with Professor Orr, draw a line between biblical and non-biblical traditions about the supernatural. We expect to show that the ground upon which this distinction is based is not well taken, and that the traditional view raises more difficulties than it solves.

Our serial treatment of the social process through which the distinctive biblical religion was evolved begins, therefore, with the settlement in Canaan as described in Judges. It is well to emphasize again that we have to choose between two competing accounts of the settlement. This feature of our problem has been treated briefly at an earlier stage of our examination. We now take it up more fully, and for a different purpose. The first of the rival narratives, as we have observed, is found in the Book of Joshua; the second, in the Book of Judges. As the Joshua version presents the same supernatural features that we encounter in the preceding books, we have counted it as a part

of the "Hexateuch" which includes the first six titles in the library of biblical writings. Although we have set aside the Book of Joshua in favor of Judges, it is well to scrutinize the former narrative quite closely at this point in order to bring out the real nature of the settlement by means of the sharp contrast between the rival versions.

The Book of Joshua consists of two parts, a glowing account of a successful attack by Israel upon the land of Canaan (chaps. 1-12), and an account of the division of the land by lot among the victors (chaps. 13-24). According to this treatise, the conquest was achieved by a military organization composed of the fighting-men of all the Israelite clans. The commanding general was Joshua, the successor of Moses. The campaign was short and sharp, and the victory magnificent and sweeping. Miraculous help from Yahweh in heaven was given the invading army. The line of approach from the eastern wilderness lay through the river Jordan, which was then at flood stage. As the priests, bearing the ark of Yahweh, entered the swirling waters there was opened before them a wide path straight across the river. Through this avenue the host of Israel marched on dry land, the waters rising like walls on both sides of them. They passed around the city of Jericho seven times, after which the walls of the city fell flat. The city was taken, and "utterly destroyed," both man and beast (6:21). From Jericho the campaign passed on to the city of Ai, where the soldiers of Joshua completely exterminated the inhabitants (8:26). And now, the kings of Canaan, greatly alarmed, effected a coalition and put a mighty army in the field against the invaders. The ensuing battle, of course, went in favor of Israel. Great stones rained from heaven upon the Canaanites. The sun and the moon stood still. The clock of time was put back. The forces of the universe were held in check until the army of Joshua had completed its terrible work. After the Canaanite army had been thus put out of the field, the destruction of the cities of the land was resumed (10:28 ff). Makkedah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, Debir—these and other ancient cities were taken and their inhabitants were destroyed. "So Joshua smote all the land,

the hill-country, and the south, and the lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, and he utterly destroyed all that breathed" (10:40). "So Joshua took the whole land" (11:23). The conquest being now complete, the soil was divided among the families and clans of Israel, who settled down to peaceful occupation. In the closing verses of the book, we read that after the people had been sent away, every man to his inheritance, it came to pass that Joshua died, and was buried in the border of his estate in the hill-country of Ephraim.

The account of the invasion found in the Book of Judges as we have seen, contrasts vividly with the foregoing narrative. In the first place, the compiler of Judges takes the view that the invasion of Canaan did not occur during the lifetime of Joshua, but after his death. "And it came to pass, after the death of Joshua, that the children of Israel asked of Yahweh, saying, Who shall go up for us *first* against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" (Judg. 1:1). In this view, Joshua was not a factor in the invasion. There was no commanding general. Nor were the Israelites organized into a single, grand army. On the contrary, the invaders went up in separate clan-groups, each fighting for itself.

Before invading the territory west of the Jordan, the Israelites appear to have established themselves first of all in the hills of Gilead *east* of the Jordan. It was here that the clan of Reuben was said to have located, whose father is called the "first-born" of Israel, probably in recognition of the fact that Gilead was the earliest Israelite settlement in Canaan (Gen. 49:3; Josh. 22:9). No notice of the conquest of this region is found in Judges; yet Gilead appears in that book to have been Israelite from a very early period. It had this character in the time of Deborah (Judg. 5:17). It was inhabited by Israelites in the days of Gideon (Judg., chap. 8). A little later it furnished an inconspicuous "judge" in the person of Jair (Judg. 10:3). The hero Jephthah was from Gilead (Judg. 11:1). The first military exploits of King Saul were in defense of the Gileadite village of Jabesh (I Sam., chap. 11). It was Mahanaim in Gilead that received Ishbaal, the fugitive son of Saul, when the kingdom

was falling away to David (II Sam. 2:8). The same town was also a refuge for David when he fled from Jerusalem at the time of Absalom's revolt (II Sam. 17:24). It was from the hills of Gilead that Elijah, the first of the great prophets, broke forth in defense of the ancient customs and religion of Israel (I Kings 17:1). A company of Gileadites aided in the dethronement of an Israelite king who did "that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh" (II Kings 15:23-25). It is well to put stress upon the settlement of this region. For, while it played on the whole an inconspicuous part in the history of Israel; while it remained in the background from first to last; yet it represents one of the characteristic social elements in Israel. Gilead stands for the backwoods, inhabited by a population tenacious of the primitive clan customs that lay at the basis of Israelite society. It was more closely identified with pastoralism than with agriculture: "Gilead was a place fit for cattle" (Num. 32:1). It was here that the goats lay along the hillsides (Song 4:1). It was here that the people fed in the days of old (Mic. 7:14). And it was to the primitive life of Gilead that Israel should be restored after the dispersion (Zech. 10:10; cf. Jer. 50:19). Gilead, therefore, seems to have given the Israelites their first foothold in the land of Canaan. From these early settlements, the clans went forth to gain other parts of the territory.

According to the first chapter of Judges, the clan of Manasseh invaded central Canaan. This district includes the famous plain of Esdraelon, which breaks in at the sea-coast on the west, penetrates the central range of hills, and gives a passage to the Jordan. The Canaanites of this region were entrenched in a number of well-built and strongly fortified cities. All ancient cities of size and importance were surrounded by high walls and guarded by towers and forts. The district of Esdraelon was the seat of several such places. The easternmost of these was the city of Beth-shean, which lay only three miles from the Jordan. From the east wall of Beth-shean, one could see the edge of the Gilead hills on the opposite side of the river. As this city commanded a main traveled road, its importance was great. On the west it was in touch with other cities of like disposition. These

were Ibleam, Taanach, Megiddo, and Dor. These places were an association of defense in the plain. Each was encircled by many dependent villages, which are spoken of by the Hebrew text as "daughters." It is not a matter for wonder that the clan of Manasseh, venturing across the Jordan from Gilead, should meet with only partial success in driving out the earlier inhabitants. Not only did the walled cities of the plain of Esdraelon survive the assault, but even the dependent agricultural villages round about them remained in possession of the Canaanites. An ancient fortified city served at once as a defense for its own immediate population and as a refuge for the dwellers of contiguous hamlets in times of danger. This is indicated by Jeremiah, who shows that in war-time the cry was, "Assemble yourselves and let us go up to the fortified cities" (Jer. 4:5). Thus it was at the time of the Israelite invasion, for "Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its daughters (i. e., villages), nor of Taanach and its villages, nor the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land" (Judg. 1:27). The text as it now stands goes on to state that the Canaanites inhabiting these towns in the plain were in time reduced to slavery by Israel. But this is clearly an editorial explanation designed to save the pride of later times, as we shall presently see. What really came to pass was this: The clan of Manasseh was forced into the hills abutting the southern side of the plain. This region was a part of what later came to be known as "the hill country of Ephraim." It contained no strong cities like Beth-shean, so that it offered a field for diversion of the Manassites. Here among the farms and pastures of the hills the rustic Canaanites were in some cases exterminated and in other cases forced into slavery. The outstanding fact here is that the clan of Manasseh obtained freehold estates by right of conquest in the hills of central Canaan. Various biblical traditions warrant the above statement that the country Canaanites who did not enjoy protection of the walled cities were partly exterminated

and partly enslaved. On the other hand, there is no warrant for asserting that Canaanites who lived in or near the walled cities were thrown into bondage. For in the course of a few years, as we shall see more fully below, the free Canaanites and the free Israelites accepted each other's presence and intermarried (Judg. 3:5, etc.). At present, however, our main concern is with the distribution of all social groups in the land in the period of settlement that followed the invasion.

North of the plain the newcomers met the same fortune as did the Manassites, for "Zebulun drove not out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Naholol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them" (Judg. 1:30). To the same effect, we are told that the clan of Asher, which also located north of the plain, did not drive out the inhabitants of the seven Canaanite cities Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob; "But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out" (Judg. 1:31 f.). Likewise, the clan of Naphtali, which also located in the same district, "drove not out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites" (Judg. 1:33).

Turning southward from the plain we find that the powerful clan of Ephraim succeeded in establishing itself in the hill-country just below the possessions acquired by Manasseh. But it had no better success than the other clans in reducing the fortified cities of the Canaanites. For we read that "Ephraim drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them" (Judg. 1:29). Other strongholds in this region, that were not taken, were the four cities of the Gibeonite confederacy. Their names are Gibeon, Kiriath-jearim, Beeroth, and Chephirah. No mention of them is made in Judges; but the Book of Joshua attempts to explain their survival in Canaanite hands as the result of a treaty with Israel obtained by deception on the part of the Gibeonites (Josh., chap. 9). It is not clear why they are not mentioned in Judges; but in II Sam., chap. 21, Gibeon appears as a city whose inhabitants are of alien descent even in the times of Saul and David. In

this passage the people of Gibeon are spoken of as "Amorites," which is an alternative biblical term for Canaanites. Two other cities call for notice here: "And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the hill country: for they would not suffer them to come down into the valley. But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim" (Judg. 1:34-35). Another unconquered city was Hazor, the location of which is uncertain (Judg. 4:2). Southeast of Gibeon was the city of Jebus, or Jerusalem, which lay among the hills of Judah. We have shown the documentary conflict in regard to this place in our second instalment. It is necessary here only to recall that Jerusalem, like so many other alien cities, was not taken at the time of the invasion (Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:21); that it remained foreign through the premonarchic period (Judg. 19:10f.); and that it was finally taken by King David, who did not exterminate its inhabitants (II Sam., chap. 5).

One of the first effects of the Israelite invasion and settlement of Canaan was a feeling of intense hostility between the Israelites and the Canaanites. It was but natural for the older inhabitants to resent the intrusion of strange clans whose avowed object was possession of the entire land. Nor could the intruders themselves regard their intended victims with friendly feelings. After the first wave of conquest had surged into the land, the situation became so tense that the Canaanites could not think of permitting the enemy to settle peacefully down without making a final struggle to recover their lost ground. It is evident from the first chapter of Judges that the efforts of the Canaanites at the time of the invasion were confined mostly to defensive operations. But they presently undertook an active campaign against the intruders. A combination of the Canaanites was organized, headed by Jabin, king of the unconquered city of Hazor (Judg., chap. 4).⁹ The allies began to collect

⁹ Judg. 4:2 calls Jabin *king* of Canaan, as if the Canaanites were a single nation. This, however, is contrary to the more reliable sources, e.g., Judg., chap. 1, in which the Canaanites appear as a crowd of independent city-states. Jabin is given this title in a passage which comes from the late editor of Judges, who supplied the pragmatic framework of the book. In chap. 5 the

their army, under the command of Sisera, in the great Plain of Esdraelon. On the other hand, the Israelites, inspired by the prophetess Deborah, who sang of their common faith in Yahweh the war-god, began to muster on Mount Tabor. The hill of Tabor, standing a few miles east of Nazareth, looks down upon the plain from its northern approach. It rises from the end of a ridge that goes back toward Galilee. The fighting men of Israel, gathered on the flat top of Tabor, could see the signs of Canaanite activity in the plain below; and they waited for the signal to rush down upon the enemy. Deborah's war song in Judg., chap. 5., implies that the season was winter. At this time the river Kishon overflows its banks, and converts a part of the Plain of Esdraelon into a morass. It is not probable that the Canaanites would have chosen this place as a winter battlefield; but it was a convenient mustering ground, central in location, through which many an army has marched. Abruptly descending from Tabor, in the midst of a rain-storm, the Israelite host of ten thousand rushed upon the army of Sisera. The Canaanites broke in confusion and fled, their horses and chariots floundering in the muddy plain.¹⁰ Sisera himself left his chariot and fled afoot, only to meet death at the hands of Jael, a Kenite woman, who was true to the covenant between her people and Israel at Mount Sinai. In the excitement of the day, it was declared that Yahweh himself had left his throne on Sinai, and come riding on a thunder-cloud to the help of Israel.

Study of this battle helps to fix in mind the social geography of Canaan during the period covered by the Book of Judges. The date of the battle is not known; but it probably took place within a few years after the first settlements. Its effect was to confirm the title of the Israelite clans to the farms and pasture lands which they had seized in the open country. As the Israelites were this time on the defensive, they made no attempt to

ancient war-song of Deborah speaks of the enemies of Israel as the *kings* of Canaan (vs. 19). Sisera here comes forward as a leading Canaanite king, and not as captain of the army of the mythical Jabin.

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that in 1799 the Turkish cavalry met with the same fate, in the same place, when pursued by the army of Napoleon.

increase the area of their conquests. No doubt the victory was purchased with much loss of life; and the Israelites were not wholly united, as the Deborah Song shows (Judg. 5:16, 17). On the other hand, the Canaanites made no further effort to expel the newcomers.

The immediate outcome of the invasion, then, was the settlement of the Israelites in the hill-country of Gilead, the hill-country of Ephraim, and the hill-country of Judah. Practically all of the ancient fortified cities, together with neighboring dependent villages, remained in control of the Canaanites. Neither the old nor the new inhabitants had a national organization. The Canaanites were a crowd of "city-states," which occasionally co-operated against enemies. The Israelites, or some of them, had the common worship of Yahweh, and possibly some traditions of common blood; but it was as difficult to bring them into a single organization as it was to form a general union of the older inhabitants.